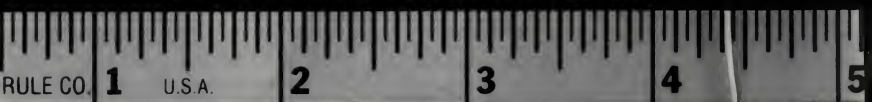


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**MAP AND GUIDE
TO FT. ANCIENT**

WARREN COUNTY, OHIO

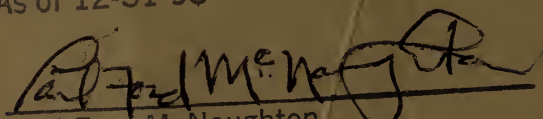
The largest
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*With Sketches, Illustrations
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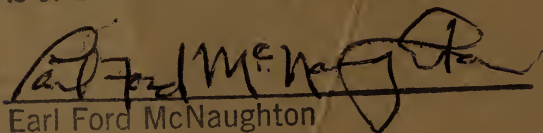
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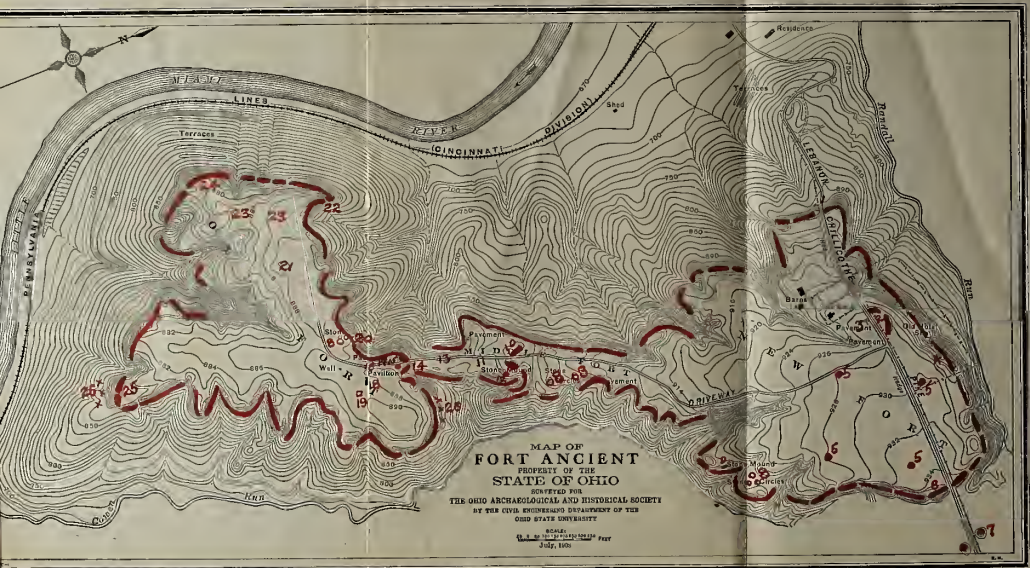
WILLIAM G. MILLS

Collection of Native North American Indian Books,
Historical Books, Atlases, plus other important au-
thors and family heirloom books.
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The numbers in color on the map correspond to the numbers in the following pages.

MAP AND GUIDE

TO

FT. ANCIENT

WARREN COUNTY, OHIO

The largest prehistoric fortification
in the Mississippi Valley

With Sketches, Illustrations and Maps

BY

WILLIAM C. MILLS

COLUMBUS, OHIO:
THE F. J. HEER PRINTING CO.
1920

MAP AND GUIDE TO FT. ANCIENT

ITEMS OF INTEREST CONCERNING FORT ANCIENT.

Site and source of purchase — The state purchased, by act of April, 1890, one hundred and eighty (180) acres; by act of April 16, 1896, one hundred and seven (107) acres; the Poor tract of three (3) acres, December 18, 1907, and the Ridge tract of twenty (20) acres June 3, 1908, making a total of three hundred and ten (310) acres. About one hundred (100) acres are inside the walls.

Points of compass — Lebanon and Chillicothe pike runs east and west through the Fort.

Shape of works — Resembles Western Continent.

Two ravines — One above the Fort, known as Randall Run, and the other below the Fort, known as Cowen Run, join the Miami valley, forming the peninsula.

Width of valley — About one-half mile. Above and below the Fort, the hills come so near together that railroad and river have scarcely room to pass.

The west wall, where the pike passes through, is 32 feet high with a base of 70 feet. Top of this wall is 291 feet above low water mark in the river and 941 feet above the Atlantic.

The distance around the enclosure, following the middle line of the embankments, is 18,712 feet or about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The walls are irregular and crooked; a line from north to south is only 4,993 feet or less than one mile. That portion of Fort Ancient lying north of the Isthmus is called the **New**

Fort. The **Isthmus** is the narrow neck which unites the New and Old Forts. The **Old Fort** is that portion which lies south of the **Great Gateway**.

The Crescent Gateway is the crescent-shaped wall crossing the Isthmus, and the space between the Crescent Gateway and the Great Gateway is sometimes called the **Middle Fort**.

High and strong walls were constructed where the approach was easy; lower ones where the approach was difficult.

There are **Moats or ditches**, both on outside and on inside of walls. There is a deep one on the inside of walls near the Great Gateway, which perhaps served as a reservoir for water.

Flat pieces of limestone in west walls are found where road passes through. This is a peculiarity of the walls at many places.

There are **Terraces** on southwest slope of walls of Old Fort and on north slopes of walls of New Fort, caused, perhaps, by land slides.

There are about 70 **gateways or openings** from 10 to 15 feet wide in the walls.

From **Point Lookout**, to the north, a fine view may be had of the Miami Valley, which is broad in the vicinity of the Fort but narrows until the hills come so near together that railroad and river have scarcely room to pass. There are many places along the west walls of the Fort where a splendid view of the valley and hills may be had.

The two mounds, outside the Fort, one on either side of the road just beyond where it passes through the east wall of the Fort, were the beginning of the parallel walls sometimes called the **Race Track**, running 2,760 feet toward the northeast and encircling a small mound. All traces of these walls are obliterated.

GUIDE.

1. Point in the west wall at one of the 70 openings in the great wall forming the Fort. The openings no doubt served the purpose of ingress and egress for the builders of the Fort. The walls at this point are about 19 feet high.

2. Crescent Mound. This mound is divided into two parts; the eastern part is perfect, but the western portion was partly cut away in an early day when the Lebanon and Chillicothe pike was constructed.

3. The stone pavement, made of flat pieces of limestone, varying from 6 to 14 inches in length and 1 to 4 inches in thickness, was discovered in 1908. The photo taken at the time, Figure 2, shows 30 feet of the pavement, which is 15 feet in width. The pavement was covered with about one foot of soil and extends from the west end of the crescent to the bottom of the small ravine back of the house, a distance of more than 100 feet. However, the greater part of the pavement was made of gravel, covered with sand. That part of the pavement extending down the banks of the ravine was made of small flat limestone.

4. Shows 1,500 feet of strongly constructed walls on the north side of the New Fort. See general description.

5. Four small mounds, one on the north side of the road and three on the south side. These mounds were examined by W. K. Moorehead in 1888-89. See Moorehead's "Fort Ancient."

6. The heavy walls constructed across the level plateau extending to the east. See Figure No. 3. The first section is 85 feet in length; the second 110 feet and the third 159 feet; they are about 70 feet broad at the base and 23 feet high.

7. Two mounds, one on each side of the road. From each mound, extending east, were constructed parallel walls a foot or more in height, about 12 feet wide and more than a

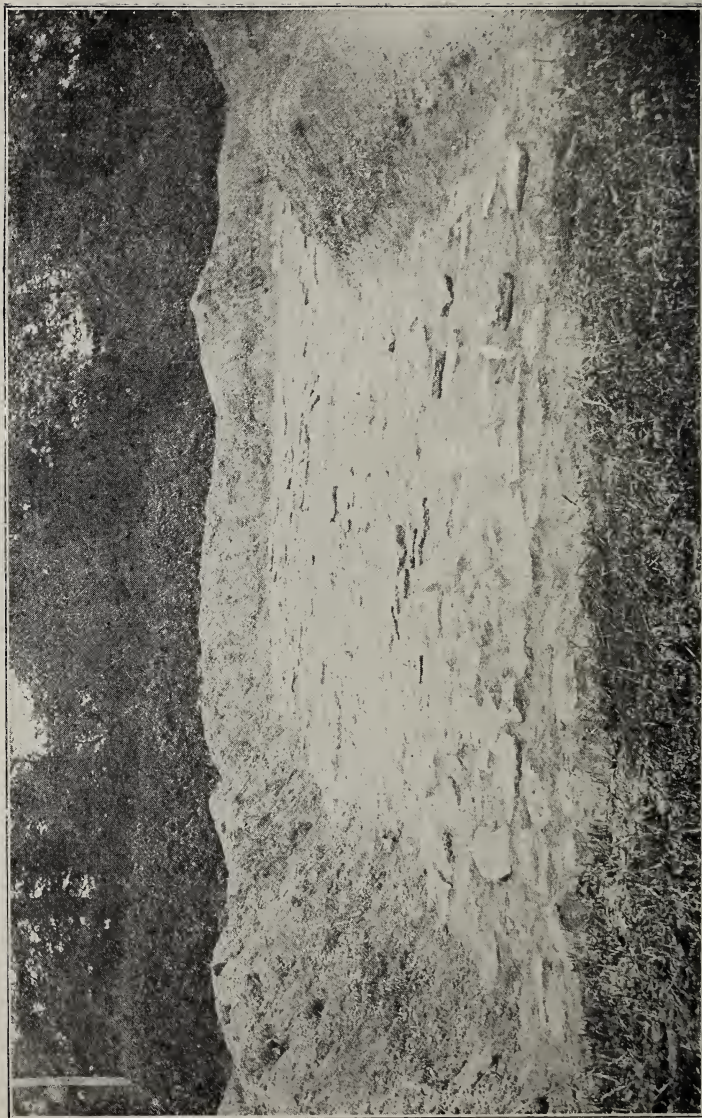


FIG. 2. Stone Pavement.

quarter of a mile in length. At the eastern end, the elevations came together in a circular curve, within the center of which was a small conical mound. The walls are now entirely obliterated.

8. Stone circles. These circles were found in a number of places within the enclosure and perhaps were the sites of tepees.

9. This mound was examined by the writer in 1908 and found to contain the remains of one burial, part of which had been removed by a former explorer. The parts remaining con-



FIG. 3. East Wall of Fort.

sisted of the lower leg bones and the right arm. With the arm were a number of pieces of mica and at the feet was found a large awl made of the ulna of the elk.

10. Crescent Gateway, which separates the middle Fort from the new Fort.

11. Middle Fort, extending from the Crescent Gateway, south to the Great Gateway, leading into the old Fort.

12. Small burial mound covered with stone. This mound was examined in 1908 by the writer and found to contain only

parts of the remains of two skeletons. All of one had been removed except portions of the right leg. Associated with the bones was found a finely chipped spear-point. The second skeleton was badly broken up though only a small portion had been removed, the head and the greater part of the body remaining. With this body were found two arrow-points, nicely chipped, one



FIG. 4. Great Gateway Entrance to Old Fort.

rudely chipped flint knife, a quantity of mica and four hammer stones.

13. No embankment was required here as the steepness of the banks of the ravine afforded ample protection against assault by an enemy.

14. Great Gateway entrance to Old Fort.

15. Burial mound from which many human remains were exhumed.

16. Pavement more than 100 feet long and 8 feet wide. This pavement led into the water reservoir near the Great Gateway.

17. Reservoir. The water supply, when opportunity for reaching the spring (No. 20) was cut off.

18. Shelter house for the benefit of visitors.

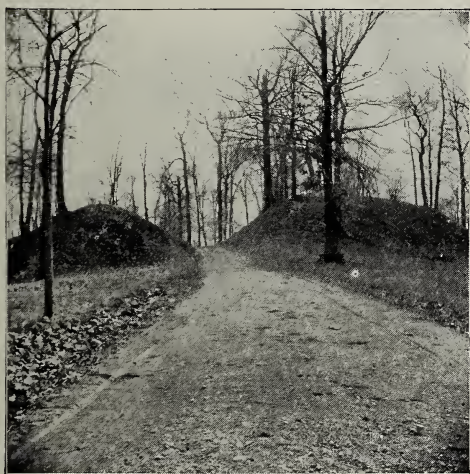


FIG. 5. Great Gateway from the North.

19. Well. This well was dug in 1916. It is 40 feet deep and 6 feet in diameter. The water is pure, very cool and refreshing.

20. Steps to the spring on the outside of the walls. 50 feet down to the spring. This spring no doubt was the water supply of the primitive occupants for this end of the Fort.

21. The cemetery, where many skeletons were exhumed by various explorers. The burials for the most part were made in

stone graves, formed by placing large flat stones on edge, around the bodies, and then covering over the top of the grave with the same kind of stones laid flat.

22. Point Lookout. This point gives one a fine view of the valley of the Miami, and is said by travelers to be one of the most interesting and picturesque in the state of Ohio.

23 Temporary village sites. Many objects, such as broken pottery, arrow and spear points, celts, etc., together with broken



FIG. 7. Mound in Old Fort Just Inside Great Gateway.

animal bones, were found on the surface, denoting a village site. A thorough examination in 1908 showed only a temporary village.

24. Terraces. (As marked upon the map.) Many explorers have considered the terraces along the hillside the work of man, but a landslide in 1913, directly above the terraces marked on the map, conclusively proved that the supposed man-made terraces were nothing more than landslides.

25. The large south gateway. In the autumn when the leaves have fallen, a splendid view of the river and valley may be had.

26. Many burials were found along the slopes of the hill, as shown.



FIG. 8. Entrance to Middle Fort or Crescent Gateway Looking South.

BRIEF GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF FORT ANCIENT.

The large prehistoric fortification known as Fort Ancient, is situated upon a slightly rolling plateau overlooking the beautiful valley of the Little Miami river in east central Warren county.

This plateau in general form resembles the Western Continent. Cut on the west and south by the Little Miami, on the north by Randall Run and on the west by Cowen Run, it is about one mile long and one-fourth mile wide. Fort Ancient with its great earthen wall constructed around the entire crenelated edges of the plateau, is justly regarded as representing the highest



FIG. 9. Plan of Fort Ancient Published With an Explanation in the Port-Folio (Philadelphia) for June, 1809. First Illustration of Fort Ancient Ever Made. Reproduced from the Original.

point attained in defensive earth-work constructed by a pre-historic people, the size of the Fort, as well as its perfection in design and construction being considered.



FIG. 10. Fort Ancient Plan By Caleb Atwater in American Antiquarian Society Proceedings, 1820.

The name Fort Ancient, was applied to the Fort in the first written account of the work, which appeared in the "Port Folio," a magazine published in Philadelphia, June, 1809. The accom-

panying cut, reproduced from the original, will be of interest when compared with the map made almost a century later by the Civil Engineering Department of the Ohio State University, 1908. The Fort has been described by many writers. In 1815, Drake, in his "Pictures of Cincinnati," describes and figures the Fort. Caleb Atwater, in 1820, in the "Transactions of the American Antiquarian Society," gives a new map which is reproduced in Figure 10. Squier and Davis, in their "Ancient



FIG. 11. Entrance to Fort Ancient from the West, Autumn Scene.

Monuments of the Mississippi Valley," copied Locke's survey, which was perhaps the best up to that time, 1846. In 1889 Mr. Warren K. Moorehead commenced an examination of Fort Ancient, and practically all of our information concerning it is due to his explorations, the results of which are set forth in his book, "Fort Ancient," published by Robert Clark & Co., Cincinnati.

A revised edition of this book was published by Mr. Moorehead in Bulletin IV, part 2, 1908, Department of Archæology, Philips Academy, Andover, Mass. Mr. Moorehead had competent engineers to make a survey of the Fort and the map made by them would, in a general way, meet every requirement, but that of a topographic map.

In 1908, the Ohio State Archæological and Historical Society



FIG. 12. Entrance to Fort Ancient from the West, Summer Scene.

invited the Engineering Department of Ohio State University to make a survey of Fort Ancient and produce a map that would meet all requirements. This map is reproduced and shown opposite page 5 of this guide. A short bibliography of the principal authors who have written about Fort Ancient will be found at the end of this guide, but no attempt in this general description will be made to discuss their views.

A TRIP AROUND THE FORT WALLS.

I will ask you to note the Fort wall as you approach the Fort from the west, coming up the winding road from the small

hamlet of Fort Ancient. Please observe the out-cropping of small flat limestone from the ends of the walls. The walls at this point are very close to 19 feet in height with a base of 70 feet. You will please note you are now on the Lebanon and Chillicothe pike, which runs east and west through the Fort. We now walk eastward and pass within that part of the Fort known as the New Fort, through one of the 70 openings. These openings are placed at strategic points in the three and one-fourth miles of wall, and no doubt served as places of egress and



FIG. 13. Entrance to Fort from Inside Looking West.

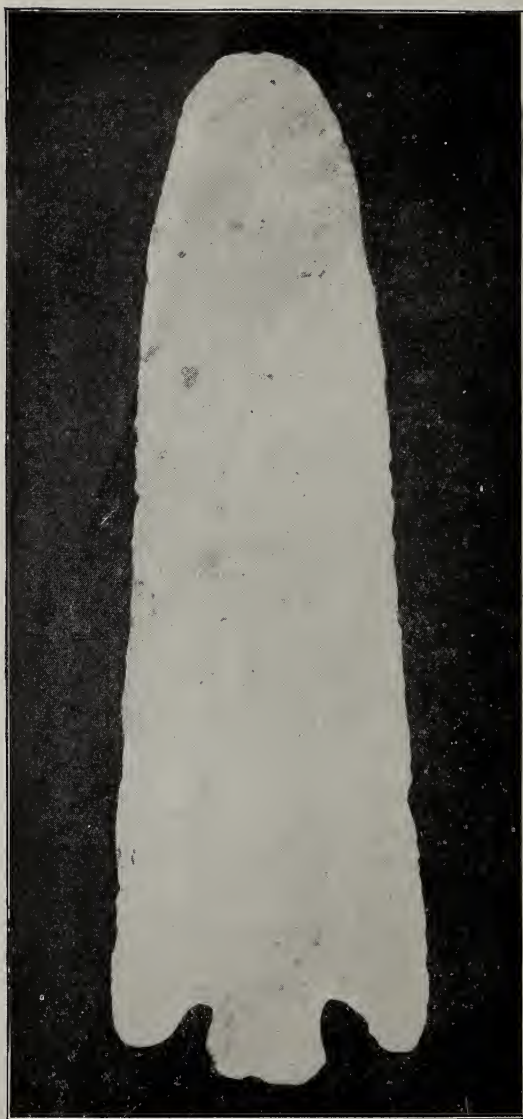
ingress for the builders. We pass through the openings in the wire fence and walk a few yards to the north toward the walls, which make a turn almost at right angles. I call your attention to the deep moat near the turn in the wall. This moat was made in removing the dirt for constructing the high walls of the Fort at this point and perhaps served as a reservoir for water, as springs are not abundant near the Fort walls, although many are found along the sides of the hill near the road as you come into the Fort.

We now follow the path on top of the Fort wall, looking eastward. To our left is a deep ravine known as Randall Run, which bears off to the north and forms a gentle slope from the top of the plateau to the bottom of the ravine. You will please note that here the wall is constructed across this gentle slope and also that here the walls are verely strong and high. We will now pass from the wall to a point within the fort. We are now walking south to what is known as the Great Cres-



FIG. 14. Entrance to Fort from East — Looking West.

cent. You will note that this Crescent is divided into two parts, separated by a gateway similar to the gateways of the Fort. A part of the Crescent on the west was partly destroyed when the Lebanon and Chillicothe pike was constructed. As near as we can learn, the western half of the Crescent was perhaps the same size as the eastern half. We will now pass into the road at the point where the Crescent is cut and note that directly opposite the end of this Crescent was found a great stone pavement (marked No. 3) which was 30 feet long and 15 feet wide.



(18)

FIG. 15. Large Quartz Spear Head, $8\frac{1}{2}$ " Long.

The greater part of this pavement was made of flat limestone, varying in width from six to twelve inches and from one to four inches in thickness. These stones were laid flat and very close together.

This pavement was discovered in 1908 when a topographic map was made. (See photograph Figure 2.) It extended from the end of the Crescent, directly south of a small gully which extends back of the residence. Its lower end was also constructed of flat stones, but very much smaller in size, while the



FIG. 16. Roadway Approaching Entrance to Middle Fort.

center of the pavement was constructed of gravel covered with fine sand.

We will now return to the Fort wall and walk in an easterly direction to the turn in the wall, which is near the road. Here we will stop and look eastward and see a vast table-land which was no doubt dotted over with small Indian villages, as evidenced by surface indications.

We now pass into the road. Looking eastward, we see two mounds, one on each side of the road. We will go to the mounds

and examine them. We find that they are conical mounds. Examination has not proven conclusively their use, but we are satisfied that they were intended for mortuary purposes and erected in memory of their dead. As we look eastward from the south mound, we can see a faint color in the soil, differing somewhat from the surrounding soil in the field. This is one of the parallel walls extending 2,760 feet to the east, where it encircles a small mound and returns in a straight line to the mound on the opposite side of the road.

We now return to the Fort Wall directly south of the road.

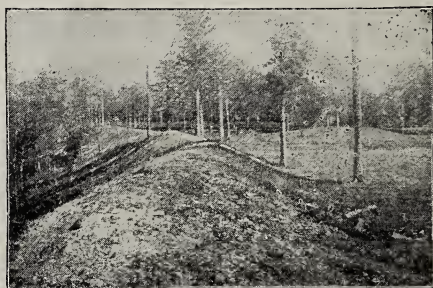


FIG. 17. East Wall, North Fort.

This wall, as you will note, crosses the Isthmus and is built very high and strong. The wall at this point is 22 feet high and 74 feet wide at the base. Looking westward, within the Fort, you will note four mounds, one in the woods directly north of the road and the other three in the level plain directly south of the road. These mounds were examined at an early day and found to have been used for mortuary purposes.

I will now ask you to face the east and look in the direction of the parallel walls. In one of the old village sites north of these walls, were found some very interesting specimens of pre-history man, differing entirely from the artifacts of the peoples

who constructed Fort Ancient. For my own convenience, I have named the peoples living in and around Fort Ancient and who constructed this wonderful earth-work, the Fort Ancient Culture, and another great culture, who also inhabited this valley both north and south of Fort Ancient, and the valleys of the Scioto and Muskingum, the Hopewell Culture. We find that these two great cultures existed here at the same time; that they were contending for supremacy; that the Fort Ancient culture had overcome some tribe of the Hopewell culture and captured



FIG. 18. Section of East Wall, Old Fort.

their artifacts, bringing them to their villages just outside of this great Fort. Here they destroyed the identity of the various objects of copper, mica, galenite and slate by breaking and depositing them in small caches in the village. Here they were found, and they are now on exhibition in the State Museum, at Columbus, Ohio.

I will ask you from this point to look in a south-easterly direction, and you will see in the distance in an open field a small mound. Here was found one of the finest specimens of spear points produced by primitive man. It is made of quartz.

semi-translucent and is eight and one-half inches in length. This was no doubt hid in the village and when the ground was plowed the spear was broken in half by being struck with the plow. This was found by the custodian, Mr. Cowen, and eight years later the other half of the spear was found. We now have the complete spear in the Museum at Columbus. A cut of this spear is shown in Figure 15.



FIG. 19. Section of South Wall, Old Fort.

I wish now to call your attention to the manner in which primitive man availed himself of the spurs of this old table-land almost entirely isolated by gorges and rivers. Around this crenelated line, following its tortuous margin and sharp declivities, they ran their earth walls, and effected this great stronghold.

I suppose that you have noticed that where the gorge is precipitous the walls were left lighter and where they cross the table-land, as you saw just a moment ago to the north, the walls

were made very much stronger and heavier, and here you will note the same thing. Strong and heavy walls are made across this table-land.

No doubt this fact will come to your mind, that there must have been a striking evidence of an organized society of intelligent leadership, to have managed such a vast undertaking. A great deal of labor was required in constructing this wall, which must have been done methodically, systematically and with con-



FIG. 20. West Wall, North Fort, Near Entrance to Middle Fort.

tinuity. You must also remember that this work was done without beasts of burden to share the labors of their owners and was done by human muscle alone. Baskets full of earth containing from a peck to one-half bushel borne on the backs of men and women, slowly built up these walls, which are three and one-half miles in length. When we take into consideration that primitive man, who built these walls was unacquainted with the use of animals of any sort or of metals; that he had no tools of

iron, but depended entirely on those made of mussel shells, found in the river, the grandeur of the achievement dawns upon our minds. Here again we find the strength and persistence of the force underlying human development, presenting itself strongly before us.

I wish to call your attention to the large poplar trees we see on this high wall. These trees are no doubt more than 200 years old.



FIG. 21. Ravine Back of Custodian's House.

We will now follow the wall down to the woods and here we again find the table-land has been cut up by little ravines. And here the wall follows the edge of these ravines, making it appear tortuous.

We are now in the woods, and I call your attention to the small circles of stone that you see upon the table-land. These were no doubt the sites of tepees. A little farther across the ravine we find a stone mound. This was examined in 1908 and found to be a mound constructed as a monument to the dead.

Just below it, is the great reservoir, no doubt used for the collecting of water. As we pass on, we come to a deep ravine. One can easily cross this ravine, but it is hard climbing, so we will go around to get to the driveway. We have passed around the deep ravine and now we leave the driveway and get upon the wall on the opposite side of this ravine. Here I call your attention to the snake-like appearance of this wall, due to the creneated form of the plateau.

Now we come to the great bend in the wall, and we look



FIG. 22. West Wall, North Fort.

westward and see a great wall one hundred or more feet away. This is the wall on the opposite side of the Fort. This narrow neck as we go forward, is still part of the New Fort, until we come to the great Crescent Gateway. We are now in the driveway leading through the Fort, and approaching the Crescent Gateway. As we pass through this great Crescent Gateway you will note a small stone mound. This mound was examined in 1908 and found to be erected as a monument to the dead. We will now pass through the Middle Fort. In front of us along

the roadway to the south, you will notice two high mounds and the road leading between them. This is the Great Gateway leading into the Old Fort and the mounds on either side are 20 feet high. As we pass through the Gateway, just on the inside we come to a small mound. Here many skeletons were removed by early explorers; descriptions of which may be found in their published reports.

We now take the wall running to the east and follow its tortuous route until we come to the most southern point in the Fort. Here again are two mounds, more than 20 feet high. At this point in the late autumn one can see the Little Miami river and the valley beyond, but at other seasons of the year the foliage is so dense that one cannot see the extended and beautiful landscape that presents itself when the leaves have fallen.

On the plateau below we find many stone graves. Turning now to the west and following the high wall, we come to another great ravine. This we will cross and strike the walls on the opposite side. Following the wall, we come to a point known as the southwest corner of the Fort. Here you will note that landslides have taken part of the wall. For a long time it was considered that the terraces found along the side of the hill below were the work of human hands, but of late years these terraces have been found to have been formed by landslides.

From this point, we look out upon a level plateau. On the inside of the Old Fort we see the site of the old villages and just beyond at the highest point near the center, we see what was known as the old cemetery. Here many bodies were exhumed by various explorers. As we follow the wall going directly north, we come to a point known as Lookout Point, where is to be seen one of the most beautiful views in the country. We follow the wall turning east, until we come to the Great Stone Circle. This is again the site of a tepee. We continue our course upon the wall, until we come to a place

marked "To the spring." If you feel so inclined, you can step down to the spring some 50 or 60 feet away, which is one of the best in the country, the water being pure, cool and refreshing. On returning to the wall we go in a northerly direction to a point directly opposite the pavilion, where was found in 1908 a stone pavement more than 100 feet long, leading into a moat, which was no doubt a water reservoir.

We will now repair to the pavilion for rest. We have traveled more than two and one-half miles and we have about one mile more of earth-works to examine. While here I call your attention to the well, dug and walled in 1916. It is 40 feet deep and 6 feet in diameter and furnishes an ample amount of cool and refreshing water for visitors. Being now refreshed we will start on our final trip around the walls.

We pass out of the roadway through the Great Gateway, looking north, and turning our faces westward, we see a very precipitous gully and note that no wall is constructed here. No doubt it was unnecessary, as it could be guarded very well without any wall in front. Now you will soon pass to the high wall on the west and follow it around through the narrow neck of the Middle Fort and find it well constructed, being very precipitous on the outside.

The walls from this point on are similar to the walls on the opposite side and we return to our starting point, well aware that we have examined one of the largest prehistoric earth-works in this country.

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